

March 30, 2007

Dear:

A story in today's edition of The Clarion-Ledger erroneously reported that under the higher education appropriations bill university faculty will get automatic 3% pay raises. As many of you who have been so actively involved in the budget process know, this is not true. While the Governor has asked the newspaper to publish a correction, I want to be sure you know the facts.

After talking to many of you and listening to your comments on best management practices for our universities, Governor Barbour insisted that the leadership of the Institutions of Higher Learning and university presidents be given broad authority to use these funds for purposes you deem appropriate and necessary. Again, at his insistence, the Conference Report on Senate Bill 3129 as it passed the Legislature contains no requirement or mandate for 3% across-the-board faculty pay raises. Whether to award faculty pay raises and how much are decisions rightly left to you.

This specific issue was a point of contention during negotiations with lawmakers and as the 2007 session ends I wanted to be sure there is clarity all around on the higher education appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Johnny Franklin
Education Policy Adviser